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Weekly highlights from the  
North Carolina Department of Commerce



## N.C. expects economic boost from 'Hunger Games' fans

North Carolina is poised to reap major dividends from tourism with the March 23 opening of "[The Hunger Games](#)," the highest-profile movie ever made in the state. "The movie is already a winner for us," said N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco. "The filmmakers spent more than \$60 million in North Carolina, and now fans are eager to come see the locations and go to the restaurants, neighborhoods and other places the stars visited. The money they spend here will be a second payoff for taxpayers."



(Left-right) Henderson-Vance County Chamber Executive Director Bill Edwards, Golden LEAF Foundation CEO Dan Gerlach, Governor Bev Perdue and Semprius CEO Joe Carr in July 2011

## Two N.C. economic development projects earn 2012 CiCi Awards

For the seventh year, [Trade and Industry Development](#) magazine has evaluated economic development projects for its CiCi Awards. The awards recognize 30 projects from the past year in two areas: Community Impact and Corporate Investment. More than 700 applications from all over the U.S. were evaluated for the 2012 awards. Governor Bev Perdue and the N.C. Department of Commerce had the honor of announcing two of the winning projects, which were among the many economic development projects announced in North Carolina in 2011.

[Semprius Inc.](#) in Vance County was recognized with a Community Impact Award (Commerce developer: [Bernard Torain](#)) and [Horsehead Corporation](#) in Rutherford County earned the Corporate Investment Award (Commerce developer: [Dallas Hardenbrook](#)). Combined, the companies are creating over 500 jobs and investing about \$440 million.

The CiCi awards feature the largest corporate investment projects. They also recognize projects that may not involve large investments, but notably impacted communities. For the Community Impact Awards, the influencing factor is how the investment will make a difference in the betterment of the community. [Read more.](#)

[7th Annual CiCi Awards](#) (*Trade and Industry Development*, March 2012)

"The Hunger Games" has the promise of both commercial and artistic success. Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development has worked with industry partners to leverage the economic opportunities of "Hunger Games" tourism. Newly developed travel tools, accessed at [VisitNC.com](http://VisitNC.com), will guide visitors to film sites, star hangouts, and places that connect with the characters and other elements of the novel.

"The Hunger Games' helped the state film industry generate a record \$220 million in spending for 2011, the incentive's first year," [N.C. Film Office](http://www.ncfilm.com) Director Aaron Syrett said. "We'll be even happier if it helps tourism reach new heights for 2012 and beyond." Assistant Secretary of Tourism, Marketing & Global Branding Lynn Minges agreed, citing the value of tourism to the North Carolina economy: In 2010, travelers spent more than \$17 billion in North Carolina. That spending supported 40,000 businesses and 183,900 jobs and generated \$1.5 billion in state and local taxes. It also reduced the average family tax bill by about \$400.

[Officials expect 'Hunger Games' to feed NC tourism](#) ([WRAL.com](http://www.wral.com), March 14)

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## Aerocrine to add 45 jobs in Wake County

Governor Bev Perdue announced on March 16 that [Aerocrine Inc.](http://www.aerocrine.com), a medical technology company, will locate its North American headquarters in Wake County. The company plans to create 45 jobs and invest \$219,000 during the next three years in Morrisville. The project was made possible in part by a \$50,000 grant from the [One North Carolina Fund](http://www.nc.gov). The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Dallas Hardenbrook](http://www.dallas-hardenbrook.com) was the developer on this project.

"We have built a business climate where future-oriented industries, such as medical technology, can thrive in a global market," Perdue said. "And our past investments in education and job training have yielded a top-notch workforce that companies like Aerocrine can count on."

Aerocrine is a medical technology company focused on improving the treatment of patients with airway diseases like asthma. Measuring airway inflammation helps provide the physician with the means to evaluate an asthma patient's response to anti-inflammatory therapy. The founders of Aerocrine in Sweden were the first to identify nitric oxide as a marker of inflammation, which is the main cause of asthma. Aerocrine has taken this significant discovery from laboratory to listed company and is now established in some of the world's largest markets. The company markets two products globally, NIOX Flex and NIOX MINO, which are used to assist in the diagnosis and control of airways disease.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average salary for the new positions will be \$69,000, plus benefits. The average annual wage in Wake County is \$44,980. [Read more from ThriveNC.com](#).

[Aerocrine to bring headquarters to Morrisville. add 45 jobs](#) ([NBC 17](http://www.nbc.com), March 16)

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## N.C.'s skilled workforce integral to manufacture of world's most powerful jet engine

Last week, [GE Aviation](http://www.geaviation.com) celebrated the shipment of its 1000th GE90-115B jet engine, the most powerful engine ever built. The engine earned a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records in 2003. A sleek fan blade built for the GE90-115B is on display in New York's Museum of Modern Art. As part of the celebrations of this important milestone, the company has been highlighting the role North Carolina and its talented aerospace workforce plays in its manufacturing prowess.

Most of the parts for the GE90-115B engine are manufactured in 16 cities across the U.S. Even more impressive is the fact that one-fourth of those cities are in North Carolina. High-pressure turbine disks and shafts, compressor disks and fan disks are manufactured in West Jefferson. Seals, splitter, retainers and spinner support come from Asheville. The Durham facility heads up engine assembly and overhaul. And Wilmington's GE Aviation facility takes care of stage-1 high-pressure turbine disks, spool, fan disk and mid seal. [Read more](#).



*N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco (right) participates in a keynote panel at the wind conference along with Virginia's Secretary of Commerce Jim Chang (second from right) and other officials.*

## Offshore wind energy potential draws developer interest

Three hundred energy industry experts, government officials and wind energy developers gathered in Charlotte earlier this month to attend the first ever [Southeastern Coastal Wind Conference](http://www.southeasterncoastalwindconference.com). N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco participated in a keynote



One of the Ming Yang's two-blade, energy-efficient wind turbines (photo courtesy of Ming Yang)

## Chinese wind energy company chooses North Carolina

On March 13, [China Ming Yang Wind Power Group Limited](#), a leading wind turbine manufacturer in China, announced the opening of its North American research and development center on the [Centennial Campus of N.C. State University](#).

Dr. Shu Ching Quek, president of Ming Yang Wind Power USA Inc., will head up operations at the facility, which will focus the company's efforts to further enhance energy output and lower the cost of electricity by improving the manufacture and operation systems of offshore wind turbines.

"We chose NCSU Centennial Campus as the location of our new research and development center to leverage the multi-disciplinary talent pool and provide a conducive environment for more innovations in this field," said Dr. Quek.

"We welcome Ming Yang Wind Power to North Carolina. As the first industrial large scale wind turbine research and development facility in the state, we look forward to a successful partnership in harnessing North Carolina's wind power potential," said Governor Bev Perdue in a Ming Yang press release. [Read more from ThriveNC.com](#).

[Green energy looks bright in Raleigh](#) (NBC17, March 13)



panel at the meeting along with Virginia's Secretary of Commerce Jim Chang and other officials. The advantages of regional collaboration provided the focus for the two day conference.

The potential for offshore wind energy along the nation's East Coast has drawn growing interest over the last several years, with much of the focus on locations in the northeast. But the southeastern U.S. has the potential to be the long-term leader in East Coast wind energy supply chain and development. North Carolina's natural wind resource is the best on the entire Atlantic seaboard, and the Southeast region overall is second to none. The region's strengths in manufacturing provide opportunities for manufacturers seeking to enter the industry's supply chain.

The business potential of the Southeast to become a major player in this large-scale industry drew the attention of wind developers currently evaluating opportunities in the United States. "We are talking about something really gigantic, right next door, that's not been tapped into at all," said Ned Farquhar, a deputy assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of the Interior.

[Wind conference in Charlotte focuses on Southeast cooperation](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, March 9)

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## Carroll participates in Eaton awards ceremony

On Feb. 28, [Eaton Corporation](#) held its "2011 Eaton Business Excellence Award" ceremony in Charlotte. On behalf of Governor Bev Perdue, N.C. Deputy Commerce Secretary Dale Carroll joined the Eaton chairman and CEO from the worldwide headquarters in Cleveland and his management team to honor the Eaton Power Distribution Operations - Americas team as recipients of this international award. During the ceremony, the Eaton manufacturing sites in Fayetteville and Asheville received the highest honors with the Premier best of class designation. Carroll presented State of North Carolina flags to leaders of Eaton's two premier plants. Eaton Corporation has over 3,200 employees at 12 sites across the state.

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## RBC becomes PNC

Governor Bev Perdue and N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary Lynn Minges were among those at the official ceremony renaming RBC Center to [PNC Arena](#), March 15 in Raleigh.

PNC Financial Services Group, which recently completed its acquisition of RBC Bank, anticipates hiring more than 250 employees across North Carolina over the next 12 to 18 months.

The new hires will be needed for the more robust suite of products and services that PNC brings to the table, as well as to directly reach out to prospective customers, said Paula Fryland, the bank's regional president for Eastern Carolinas.

"PNC is really committed to growing as a company," Fryland said Wednesday morning during an interview in her office on the 21st floor at the bank's downtown Raleigh office. "The reason we are here in North Carolina is because we think it is a terrific opportunity for us to grow."

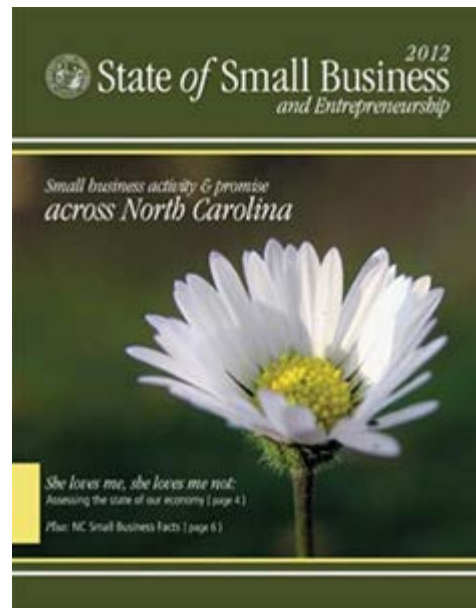
[PNC is in an expansive mood](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, March 15)



(Left - right) State of N.C. European Trade Representative Gabriele Schwinghammer, Acroprint Product Manager Mihaela Mitran, Mobile Reach President Nasrin Azari, and Commerce's International Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson at CeBIT

## Trade division and N.C. ICT exporters exhibit in Germany

The annual [CeBIT 2012](#) tradeshow was held March 6-10 in Hannover, Germany. With more than 4,200 firms from 70 countries displaying a wide range of new products and leading-edge solutions in mobile Internet, IT security, cloud computing, and smart networking, the event brought together hundreds of buyers and sellers to discuss various



## N.C. Commissioner for Small Business releases annual publication

North Carolina's Commissioner for Small Business Scott Daugherty has released the [2012 State of Small Business and Entrepreneurship](#). The new publication features messages from Daugherty and Governor Bev Perdue, as well as an essay by the SBTDC's Jeff DeBellis that assesses the state of our economy.

Also included are updated North Carolina business facts and data related to exporting, technology commercialization, minority business, entrepreneurship, employment, job creation, and investment and R&D funding.



## Film office uses SXSW to promote filming in N.C.

The [N.C. Film Office](#) returned to [SXSW](#) in Austin, Texas, as a sponsor. This year the office took over the filmmakers lounge where producers and directors could meet directly with the office. The lounge provided a relaxing getaway for filmmakers to enjoy complimentary Wi-Fi, massages, snacks and drinks. The N.C. Film Office branded the film lounge with its "Relax" brand, using the office's one-of-a-kind rocking director chairs where filmmakers could sit and rock. The lounge offered the perfect setting for the office to interact and pass on information

opportunities in the digital technology market. Two N.C. companies, [Acroprint Time Recording Co.](#) of Raleigh and [Mobile Reach](#) of Cary, exhibited in the N.C. Department of Commerce-sponsored booth at the show. Customer traffic was very good, and the North Carolina companies reported strong lead generation and results. Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson and N.C. European Trade Representative Gabriele Schwinghammer participated in the event to facilitate North Carolina exports and assist the companies in forming alliances and partnerships with European buyers.



*The N.C. delegation visiting the offices of the National Society of Industries in Peru*

## Trade delegation participates in “Doing Business in Peru” program

The N.C. Department of Commerce's International Trade Division and several North Carolina companies participated in the annual "Doing Business in the International Marketplace" program presented by [Wake Tech Community College](#) and [NCSU College of Textiles](#). This year's program took a delegation to Lima, Peru, to learn about doing business in Peru with a special focus on global textile business opportunities. Through first-hand interaction with leaders of business and industry, North Carolina companies were able to pursue international business opportunities and understand the most important factors influencing the success of companies in today's global economy. While there, the delegation toured the manufacturing facilities of Peruvian companies like [Topitop](#) and [Creditext](#) and met with influential Peruvian trade associations like [SNI](#) (pictured above) and the Lima Chamber of Commerce. [Read more.](#)

## Annual federal environmental symposium to be held in Fayetteville

U.S. Senators Richard Burr and Kay Hagan and the [North Carolina Military Business Center](#) will co-host the [3rd Annual North Carolina Federal Environmental Symposium](#) on June 13 in Fayetteville.

This statewide symposium is focused on helping installations and federal agencies meet their net zero goals and the requirements outlined in the U.S. Department of Defense Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan, while simultaneously creating business opportunities for North Carolina businesses.

about filming in North Carolina with attendees in an intimate setting. More than 500 filmmakers enjoyed the lounge while learning about [North Carolina's enhanced film incentive](#).

## \$9 million in Rural Center grants to create 1,100 jobs

The [N.C. Rural Economic Development Center](#) has awarded 84 grants totaling over \$9 million to create jobs, improve the availability of health care, and plan water and sewer improvements in rural communities. The grants are projected to create or retain 1,169 jobs and assist projects in 44 counties.

The center's board of directors approved the grants Feb. 29. The grants were made possible by appropriations of the [N.C. General Assembly](#) and a grant to the Rural Center from the [Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust](#). [Read more.](#)



## Extron Electronics manufactures speakers at new Raleigh facility

[Extron Electronics](#) is now manufacturing its award-winning, patented Flat Field® and SoundField® ceiling tile speakers at the company's brand new 146,000-sq.-ft. East Coast regional headquarters in Raleigh.

The new, state-of-the-art manufacturing and testing facility is equipped with custom-designed machinery to ensure that the speakers are built to meet Extron's exacting standards for exceptional quality and performance. In addition, the facility has received full authorization by Underwriters Laboratories to manufacture these products as UL 1480 certified speakers for commercial and professional audio applications.

"With the larger facility, we are excited to bring the manufacturing and testing in-house for our Flat Field and SoundField speakers," says Andrew Edwards, president of Extron and a native of Wilson. "The speaker manufacturing facility is just one aspect of our newly expanded East Coast operations in Raleigh that also includes sales, training, and R&D, with numerous career opportunities now available."

Extron is a leading manufacturer of audio products and speakers for pro AV integration, including ENERGY STAR qualified power amplifiers, audio digital signal processors, and a family of speakers for surface mount, ceiling, and in-wall installations.

The symposium will engage up to 350 industry and government representatives in facilitated, interactive discussions focused on current DoD and installation initiatives, future requirements and industry recommendations to achieve sustainability objectives. [Learn more.](#)



*Advaero President and CEO Greg Bowers shows off a high-tech material fatigue test system available at Gateway University Research Park*

## Gateway University Research Park: a catalyst for innovation in North Carolina

In 2008 in southeast Greensboro a piece of nanotechnology made the transition from advanced research to commercial application. Facilitating the transition was [Gateway University Research Park](#), a shining example of North Carolina's research and development infrastructure and the state's commitment to transferring ideas and technology from the lab to the commercial marketplace.

Heated vacuum-assisted resin transfer molding, or HVARTM, is a cutting-edge process for creating carbon-fiber composite materials. Composite materials, whose physical properties enable new ways to manufacture and assemble structures, are being incorporated into a wide array of practical commercial applications. This technology was initially developed at [North Carolina A&T State University](#). [Advaero Technologies Inc.](#) was established as a start-up nanotechnology company through collaboration with Gateway University Research Park. Advaero secured the license for the technology through the university for the purpose of bringing the technology to market. [Read more from ThriveNC.com.](#)

## Innovate Carolina comes to Raleigh in April

The Carolinas Chapter of the Product Development and Management Association will host its third annual [Innovate Carolina Conference](#) in downtown Raleigh on April 20.

As the economic downturn continues, many organizations are realizing that they must innovate, but the barriers and constraints are large. The focus of the 2012 Innovate Carolina Conference is "Innovating in Tough Times: Practical Ways for Innovating when Budgets are Tight and Resources are Limited."

The innovation conference features keynote speaker and

[Construction completed. Extron looks to hire](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, March 15)

## Kyma cuts energy usage after grant from N.C. Green Business Fund

[Kyma Technologies Inc.](#) of Raleigh, which provides crystalline gallium nitride, aluminum nitride and aluminum gallium nitride materials and related products and services, has announced energy-saving measures completed in 2011, including the largest geothermal HVAC system for cleanroom air handling in North Carolina.

After being awarded more than \$400,000 in April 2011 by the [North Carolina Green Business Fund](#), Kyma contracted TriMech Inc. of Mebane to install a 30-ton geothermal HVAC system and a 20-ton energy-efficient industrial chiller, and [Danco Electrical Contractors Inc.](#) of Youngsville to install energy-efficient lighting. Also, Kyma installed a facility-wide data acquisition system for energy usage analysis and optimization. It estimates that the energy needed to run the facilities for its cleanroom has been reduced by 68% and that the firm's overall energy usage has been reduced by 35%. The data acquisition system will also allow continued analysis of other energy-consuming systems to identify additional energy savings opportunities. [Read more.](#)

## Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

**Jan. 1 - March 20, 2012**

<b>New projects assigned:</b>	100
<b>Projects announced:</b>	26
<b>Jobs announced:</b>	4,204
<b>Capital investment announced:</b>	\$1.16B
<b>Industry visits by existing industry staff:</b>	252

author Stephen Shapiro of the No. 1 innovation and creativity book of 2011, *Best Practices are Stupid*. North and South Carolina-based companies and organizations scheduled to share their experience, tools and lessons learned include Red Hat, Burt's Bees, Bank of America, and NetApp. In addition, N.C. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Labor and Economic Analysis Stephanie McGarrah will participate on a panel discussion during the conference.

The conference targets managers and executives responsible for organic growth including innovation, product development and marketing leaders, as well as entrepreneurs interested in collaboration with larger companies. Registration is open.



## Travel Channel debuts North Carolina hub page

The Travel Channel has just launched [a North Carolina hub page](#), featuring the state's mountains, beaches, cities, tastes and more via a collection of articles, photos and videos. In addition, the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development worked with the Travel Channel's interactive team and North Carolina's Craig Distl to compile a list of must-follow Twitter feeds from across the state. Travel Channel producers included several recommended in-state Twitter feeds in the initial launch, including [@HighCountryHost](#), [@ncculture](#), [@onebadchef](#), [@theouterbanks](#) and [@visitRaleigh](#).

## N.C. in the News

### This Week's Highlights

- [PNC is in an expansive mood](#) (*The News & Observer* -- Raleigh, March 15)
- [Business leaders talk job growth at N.C. Chamber meeting](#) (*News 14 Carolina*, March 14)
- [Clayton manufacturing plant to reopen after acquisition](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, March 14)
- [Expansion at Apple site in Maiden](#) (*Hickory Daily Record*, March 11)
- [Asheville's Wong receives small business award](#) (*Asheville Citizen-Times*, March 10)
- [Destination restaurant gets Main Street grant](#) (*Washington Daily News*, March 10)
- [Survey: Charlotte boasts fast-growing job producing startup community](#) (*WRAL*, March 9)
- [Pinehurst receives \\$200,000 grant to help renovate historic steam plant](#) (*The Pilot - Southern Pines*, March 9)
- [Elon poll: Economic mood brightens in North Carolina](#) (Elon University, March 2012)

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